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**FUTURE STABILITY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**

**BY**

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**FUTURE STABILITY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA**

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## ABSTRACT

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Political and Military issues relative to the current instability in the Horn of Africa. Analysis of future stability in the region will address the past and current unresolved political issues leading to conflicts in Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. The post-independence military buildups and their subsequent employment to achieve political objectives by individual states will be discussed. The negative impact of insecurity on the region's economy, social infrastructure and threat to neighboring states will be highlighted. The roles of other regional leaders, OAU, UN and the International Community in conflict prevention and resolution in the region will be critically analyzed.



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## PREFACE

This research on African related issues could not have been possible without contributions of Faculty Instructors, fellow students and Staff of the Army War College. Special gratitude goes to Professor David C. Bennett, the Project Advisor, who spent his time to guide and encourage me on my research. Ambassador Marshall McCallie, Deputy Commandant for International Affairs who engaged me constantly on lively discussions regarding African issues. COL Thomas A. Dempsey, the Director of African Studies, Who greatly assisted me with his expertise on African matters. Finally, I personally wish to thank Jacqueline S. Bey, a professional librarian, who was always ready to assist me in the search for reference books and material.



## FUTURE STABILITY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

As the rest of the world moves forward to the challenges of the next millennium, the continent of Africa is still reeling from various forms of crises, brought about by political turmoil, weak economies and social problems. The origins of some of the causes of instability have roots in the region's colonial era while the rest stemmed from the post independence period. The Horn of Africa is one of the key areas of major instability in Africa. It is necessary to carry out a brief analysis on the causes of instability in the countries of this region with a view to providing remedies that may bring stability in the region. Regional stability in the Horn will greatly enhance economic and social development for the people of the region.

### AIM

The aim of this paper is to briefly analyze the past and current causes of instability in the Horn of Africa region from the political and military perspective, and suggest remedies.

### HORN OF AFRICA STATES - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Horn states comprise Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Eritrea. There is however other countries whose proximity or historical ties either influence or are themselves influenced by events in the Horn region. Kenya shares common borders with Somalia and Ethiopia. Sudan borders with Ethiopia and Eritrea. Egypt and Libya though not bordering any of the region's states have great influences in the region. Ethiopia also known by the ancient name of Abyssinia has a history dating back to the BC era. It thrived as an African empire, which was never colonized by any foreign power. There was however a brief Italian occupation in the World War II period. Emperor Haile Selassie was dethroned in September 1974 and later executed.

Eritrea on the other hand was created as an Italian Colony in 1890 after the ceding of a small territory by the Ethiopian Monarchy. After the defeat of Italian forces in the World War II, Great Britain took over the colony's administration until the UN federated the territory to Ethiopia in 1952. After numerous political problems, the federation ceased to be effective in 1962 as Eritreans struggled for independence; Eritrea eventually became independent of Ethiopia on 24 May 1993. Somalia attained its independence in July 1960 after a merger of the then British Somaliland colony and Italian Somaliland. Djibouti, which had been a French colony (French Somaliland), attained its independence from France in June 1977.

### SOURCES OF CONFLICT

The most prevalent source of conflict and instability in the Horn of Africa regions is that of ethnic hegemony. Prior to the partition of Africa by European powers, at the Berlin conference of 1884 various ethnic groups in the region existed as distinct societies with freedom of movement within their ancestral areas of habitation. With the entry of colonial powers in the 1890s and the formalization of colonial borders of administration, many ethnic groups soon found their free movements restricted or completely curtailed.

In the early 1960s until the mid 1970s, the colonial powers gradually granted independence to the colonies. The fact that the region's colonies were administered by different European powers with the exception of Ethiopia, left little room for deliberations on the desired boundaries of each colony prior to independence. In addition to the ethnic and border factors, the leadership styles of post independence governments in the region introduced a new dimension of political instability. Successive repressive regimes pursuing self interest goals while guided by radical political ideologies took center-stage in the events of the region. Today, ethnicity, border disputes and inter-ethnic/clan rivalries are the main pillars around which instability in the Horn of Africa revolves. Solutions to conflicts should be sought to prevent further deterioration of this region.

## **SOMALIA**

### **HISTORICAL SETTING**

In the years immediately following independence, Somalia pursued a parliamentary form of democracy. The national ideal professed was one of political and legal equality. The level of political participation often surpassed that in many western democracies.

Although the country was unified as a single nation at independence, there were however two separate countries as viewed from an institutional perspective. The formerly British North and the Italian South had developed separate administrative, legal and education systems with diverse procedures and languages. The North had misgivings about dominance by the Southerners, centering on the distribution of power among the clan families and between the two regions.

Despite the difficulties in integrating the North and South, post independent Somalia adopted a form of ideology known as Pan-Somalism. This was aimed at unifying all areas populated by ethnic Somalis into one country or Greater Somalia. This was responsible for the support Somalia gave to the secessionist movement in the North Frontier District of Kenya in 1964-1967 and its war with Ethiopia over the Ogaden province in 1977-1978.

#### **Political**

From 1960, Pan-Somalism, clanism and political patronage continued to play a bigger role in Somali politics. The result was interclan rivalry, loose political alliances, defections and finally emergence of undisputed warlords. The distinct phases were the Hussein Government 1964 - 67, and the Igaal Government, 1967 - 69. The Somali military was highly politicized resulting in the assassination of President Shermaarke and removal of Prime Minister Iqaal. This ushered in a new ruler, army commander Siad Barre, who was installed as President in 1969.

The Siad Barre regime survived through a period of economic depression after the unsuccessful Ogaden war with Ethiopia in 1978. The United States was a reluctant ally who only offered enough aid to maintain internal security. For the rest of his rule, Siad Barre had to put up with stiff political opposition groups, interclan rivalry and eventually clan- based militant warlords. His regime grew more and more oppressive leading to his overthrow and exile 1991.

The eventual situation in Somalia after Siad Barre's departure deteriorated. Despite the intervention of the United Nations, the United States and other members of the international community, inter clan wars and factional fighting have continued to rage amidst famine and poverty. Northern Somalia has broken from the South and declared its independence. The North has failed to reconcile with the South and Somalia is now a failed state.

### **Political stalemate**

When President Siad Barre and his supporters finally fled Mogadishu on 27 January 1991, it was not easy to imagine that his departure would ignite a series of political crises for Somalia. Unlike in other countries of the world where the departure of an unpopular regime would usher in relief and new optimism, the Somali case was quite the opposite from the onset.

Clan and factional fighting raged with impunity in the background of a severe famine that had already claimed many lives. Somalia's two tribal groupings, the Samal and Sab, are the key players in Somali politics today. The main Samal clans are Hawiye, Darod, Issaq and Dir. The Sab group includes the Digil and Rahanwein clans. All these clans are themselves divided into several sub clans and major families have aligned themselves to various factions each trying to wrestle for control or establish some form of rule either in the whole or specific regions within Somalia.

### **Clans and political parties**

The current political movements created along the lines of clan structures are:

United Somali Congress (USC). The Hawiye clan in central Somalia around Mogadishu created this group. It is however split into two factions, one led by Hussein Aideed (he took over from his late father General Farah Aideed) and the other led by Ali Mahdi.

Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). The Majerain subclan of the Darod clan, who live in the Northeast Somalia, created this group.

Somali National Front (SNF). This is the movement of the Maheran sub clan of the Darod clan, which lives in Southern Somalia on the Kenyan border. The former president of Somalia, Siad Barre belongs to this sub clan.

Somali National Movement (SNM) created by the Issaq clan of Northwestern Somalia. Since 1991, the SNM had proclaimed independence of Somaliland in this region.

Somali Patriotic Front (SPF), was founded by the Ogaden subclan of Darod clan who live partly in the Southern and partly in Central Somalia, is currently split into two factions.

Somali Democratic Movement (SDM). This is the movement of the Rahawein clan, made up of sedentary farmers who live in southern and Western Somalia. This clan is also split into two factions.

Somalia Democratic Association (SDA). This is the party of the Dir clan living in North Western Somalia.

Apart from the above, there are numerous smaller parties in Somalia as well as coalitions of parties such as the Somali National alliance (SNA) which is a group of Pro Aideed factions.<sup>1</sup>

## **Territory and ethnicity**

The great powers, i.e. Great Britain, France, Italy and Abyssinia (Ethiopia) partitioned Somaliland among themselves. Somali ethnic homeland was divided into five separate colonial possessions and administrative boundaries. These were, British Somaliland (Northern Somalia), Italian Somaliland (Southern Somalia), French Somaliland (Territories of Afas and Issas), Ethiopian Somaliland (Ogaden region under the Ethiopian rule) and Kenya Somaliland (Northern Frontier District of Kenya under British administration).

It has been argued that the Colonial systems which caused the separation and isolation of Somali ethnic groups into different administrative jurisdictions brought about certain changes on the common characteristics of the Somali ethnic community. These colonial systems, it is claimed, weakened and effectively reduced large-scale movement and communication of Somali co-ethics across the boundaries of each colonial possession. Such ethnically separated Somalis, it is finally argued, developed different attitudes, outlook and lifestyles, which altered in some measure parts of their common ethnic characteristics.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that colonial powers then had acted with total disregard for ethnic cohesion while drawing up the various administrative boundaries is indisputable. It is also true that this problem is not unique to the Ethnic Somalis in the Horn of Africa but applies equally to virtually every country in modern day Africa. To accommodate arguments such as the one presented in the case of ethnic Somalis in the Horn of Africa is to create a bad precedence in countries which have similar colonial legacies but have chosen to build multi ethnic nations and develop peacefully. While it is important that an ethnic group may be allowed to retain common characteristics if it chooses so, it should not necessarily be within the confines of one state or one country. Somalis are essentially bound by one language and one religion, a condition, which is not inherent in many less troubled countries of Africa. It is important to note that enhancing Somalia's cohesiveness as a nation should be much easier than that of African nations who have forty ethnic groups or more.

## **SOMALI MILITARY**

Before the collapse of Somalia as a state in 1991, the Somali military was made up of Army, Navy and Air Defense Command. High-ranking Army officials played a major role in Somalia's political affairs. The total strength of the Armed Forces was about 50,000 personnel.

Until January 1991, Army ground forces were organized into twelve divisions composed of four tank brigades, forty five mechanized and infantry brigades, four commando brigades, one surface - to - air missile brigade, three field artillery brigades, thirty field battalions and one air defense battalion.

The Somali Air Force was organized into three fighter ground attack squadrons; three fighter squadrons, one counterinsurgency squadron; one transport squadron; and one helicopter squadron, none believed to be operational since 1992. Small poorly equipped naval forces are not believed to be operational.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the Somali military equipment and weaponry are soviet hardware delivered between 1972 and 1977. About 50% of the equipment were lost during the 1977 Ogaden war, and much of the remainder has deteriorated rapidly over the years.<sup>4</sup>

### **Impact of military buildup**

Although the Somali military power has since disintegrated into factional militias, the fact that it was able to initiate a huge military build up that was not proportional to its security needs at the time offers some basis for future considerations. There is also no guarantee that whichever direction and whatever time the Somali crisis is resolved, Somalia will not re-establish an unchecked military build-up to fan more conflicts in the region. Currently, there are numerous small arms and medium range weapons in the hands of faction fighters that pose a threat to the security of neighboring countries in the region.

### **Remedies**

The suggested remedies to move Somali from a failed state to a functioning state are not exhaustive. Others may supplement the remedies that will be proposed in this paper.

The UN should pass a resolution on an arms embargo to control movements or sales of arms to any Somali faction from without and within Somalia itself. This should be imposed in order to limit the magnitude of factional fighting.

The UN to establish a total trade embargo between any country, company or individual with any Somali faction with the exception of UN supervised importation of food, medicines, clothing or any other commodity for humanitarian needs.

The UN to seek assistance from the international community to re-establish institutions, administration and welfare services in conjunction with popularly accepted local Somali leaders.

The UN to evoke chapter VII (peace enforcement) to contain uncompromising factional leaders and isolate them from administrative functions.

The UN to recognize and appreciate the peaceful process and co-existence already taking root in the self declared state of Somaliland (former British Somaliland). This breakaway province to be supported, protected and encouraged to strengthen its institutions with a view to being fully recognized as an autonomous state if the southern part (former Italian Somaliland) continues to resist changes for the better.

The UN, OAU, African regional leaders and other members of the international community to ensure security of innocent Somalis by adopting all means necessary to contain and finally end the conflict within Somalia and prevent it from re-occurring.

The UN and OAU to monitor and maintain their presence in Somalia and ensure that it does not slide back into a state of anarchy.

The proposed measures may form the basis from which the rehabilitation of this failed state. If the current situation is left to continue indefinitely, the potential for international conflict, humanitarian crises (as the last famine) and regional instability shall continue. Due to its geographic location and religious

background, an unstable Somalia will be a fertile breeding ground for rogue states and terrorist group activities.

## **ETHIOPIA**

### **HISTORICAL SETTING**

The formation and evolution of culture and feudal monarchy in Ethiopia spanned from the first millennium BC. At the time the Europeans started to venture into the continent of Africa in the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD Ethiopia was already a powerful and wealthy Empire. As the Europeans settled by demolishing existing African traditional rule and establishing their own forms of governments, Ethiopia was spared to continue ruling itself. After the partition of Africa in the Berlin conference of 1884, the British, French and the Italians were the European powers that established colonies in the regions around Ethiopia. After the death of Emperor Yohannes in 1889, Minilik the King of Shoa region sealed an Italo-Ethiopian pact , the treaty of Wichall in May 1889. A small area of northern Tigrai was thus ceded to Italy in exchange for supply of arms and to support Minilik's bid for the emperorship of Ethiopia against other regional contenders.<sup>5</sup> After emperor Minilik's rule, successive emperors ruled and by mid1920s Empress Zawditu assumed the throne.

Upon the death of Empress Zawditu in 1930, Negus Tafari was crowned Haile Selassie I and assumed leadership. On 2 May 1936, he was exiled after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia but regained his rule in 1941 after the defeat of Italians. After World War II, Ethiopia's status as a sovereign state was confirmed by the British. Eritrea, which had been an Italian colony was granted to Britain for administration and loose federation to Ethiopia through a UN mandate in 1941 which was to last till 1962. However, the Ogaden region of the former Italian Somaliland, certain strategic areas such as the French Somaliland border, the Addis-Ababa Djibouti railroad collectively termed "Reserved Areas" remained temporarily under the British administration.<sup>6</sup>

Haile Selassie later made territorial claims on Eritrea citing racial, cultural and economic reasons inseparable from Ethiopia but this was rejected by the British due to the growing Eritrean sense of separate political identity. When the UN mandate expired in 1962 however, the British ceded the Eritrean territory to Ethiopia. Similarly, Italian Somaliland was intended by the British to be part of "Greater Somalia" thus the emperor's claims to that territory were also rejected.<sup>7</sup> A military Junta led by COL Mengistu Haile Mariam deposed Emperor Haile Selassie. In 1974, the Emperor was subsequently executed.

### **Political**

Unlike Somalia, Ethiopia is influenced by traditional Christianity dating back two thousand years, Islamic influence in the seventh and eighth centuries AD and modern Christianity in the nineteenth century. At least seventy languages are spoken as mother tongue. There are however four main ethno-linguistic groups, the Amhara, Tigray, Oromo and Somali who have direct political impact in Ethiopian politics today.

These four main ethnic groups individually influence the various numerous sub ethnic groups, clans and families that fall under their groupings. It is important at this stage to mention that agitation for political changes, liberation struggles, secessionist movements and other forms of power struggles steamed from ethnic or sub-ethnic interests and they were organized on ethnic lines.

Ethnic and sub-regional conflicts that persist today within Ethiopia and its environs are deeply rooted in administration changes brought about by the Italian invasion and administration before World War II, the post war reforms by British administration, and the Ethiopian emperor's political interests and decisions. These actions gave birth to secessionist threats in Eritrea, the Amhara-Tigray heartland, and the largely Somali occupied Ogaden and its adjacent regions. Out of these, the Eritrean problem was resolved on 24 May 1993 when Ethiopia recognized Eritrea's independence following a referendum. A dispute over an ill-defined border between the two has flared into a small-scale war and the problem unresolved. Ethiopia's current possession of the Ogaden and Haud regions of Somalia dates back to the 1890's conquest of Harer by King Menelik of Ethiopia. In 1945, Emperor Haile Selassie claimed Italian Somaliland as "lost province" to pre-empt the possibility of British support for a separate Somali state that would include Ogaden. A point to note here is that the British eventually evacuated Ogaden in 1948, leaving Ethiopian officers to take over administration in the Ogaden City of Jijiga. All forms of Somali demonstrations were suppressed. Apart from the Eritrean issue that will be discussed under the Eritrean political situation, Tigray and Ogaden issues were and will continue to be major sources of conflict in Ethiopia. In the southern regions, the Oromo and Somali liberation fronts were already active.

On 20 May 1991, the combined forces of both external and internal movements ended Mengistu Haile Mariam's Marxist military junta's rule. World observers who had been following the events carefully were optimistic that regional conflicts in Ethiopia region were almost over. The ill-defined border issue with Eritrea has proved to be a major obstacle to peace in the region. The Oromo ethnic rebel movement has resurrected for probably the same reasons i.e. political and economic like it did before. The Ogaden issue, though less volatile, cannot be written off as a gone case. Pressure groups in Ogaden together with their external supporters have not renounced the ideals they have already voiced before. Several ethnic movements dissatisfied with one political problem or another are on the rise forming or joining existing insurgency movements. Ethiopia is already back to where it was in 1974 – 91, a period marked by ethnic tension and animosity.

#### **Ethiopia-Eritrea border conflict**

On 12 May 1998, the Eritrean government unilaterally deployed its army units inside areas that were being peacefully administered by Ethiopia. The basis of Eritrea's claims is Italian maps based on the Italo-Ethiopian treaty of 1902. When Dictator Benito Mussolini invaded Ethiopia in 1935, an act, which technically rendered any treaties already signed between the two automatically null and void. It is important to note that at the time before the May 1998 conflict, areas under de-facto Eritrean or Ethiopian administration were well known and accepted by both sides. Furthermore, the border dispute had already been tabled before the League of Nations, as Ethiopia was an equal member of the league at the time of

the Italian Invasion. The border issue was also in the process of being dealt with peacefully by a bilateral border commission.

Apart from these few statements there are also several legal violations of provisions governing the settlement of disputes that are accepted under the UN and OAU articles. International law stipulates that a country which has territorial claims on areas peacefully administered by another country must not resort to force; it has to bring the issue to international mediation.

The disputed territory in question had been validly recognized by the League of Nations after Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 hence its invalidity must be deliberated by the United Nations if another party other than Ethiopia will challenge so.

The OAU (of which Eritrea is a member) has clearly stipulated through Article III, paragraph 2 of its charter that "there be respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its alienable right to independent existence. "Article III, paragraph 4 encourages "peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiations, mediation, conciliation, or arbitration".<sup>8</sup>

Ethiopia is not on record as violating any of the above rules. Ethiopia has handled the invasion with all diplomatic channels available in pursuant of the existing provisions. It has also an alienable right to take up arms and defend itself from aggression. The border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea, regardless of who is the aggressor, has become a major source of conflict in the region. The nature of the dispute in itself is likely to arouse cases of border issues in the already volatile regions of not only the Horn of Africa but elsewhere.

## **ETHIOPIAN MILITARY**

Although volunteers make up a large part of Ethiopian army, the government has had to rely on conscripts to fill the lower ranks. In mid 1991, approximately 6 million Ethiopian males aged 18 to 23 years were eligible for military service. Ethiopia hence has enough manpower to mobilize in case of war.

The United States had offered Foreign Military Assistance the Ethiopian military since the signing of a 1953 agreement. This assistance lasted until 1977 when Ethiopia switched over and sought assistance from the then Soviet Union. Thereafter, the Ethiopian military also received assistance from Cuba at the outbreak of the Ogaden war with Somalia parallel to that of the Soviet Union. Former East Germany also played a role more important than any other European nation in providing military assistance to Ethiopia. In early 1990's after Russia's change of policy towards Ethiopia, Addis Ababa's relations with North Korea took on added importance. Not to be outdone, Israel also became one of Ethiopia's most reliable suppliers of military assistance purely for security reasons in regards to the Red Sea coast and other areas of strategic interest as well as to avert Arab influence. Given this magnitude of diverse multinational military assets, one can safely assume that Ethiopia has been one of the most equipped armies in sub-Saharan Africa.

After the 1974 overthrow of Haile Selassie, his successor Mengistu Haile Mariam was confronted by several internal rebellions, the major ones being the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF). Since the end of World War II, it was Somalia (in 1977 - 78) and

Eritrea ( in 1998), were the only countries to have posed serious external threats. The emergence of rebel groups like the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) has entered the fray in fighting for one political objective or another.

### **Military branches**

Ethiopia has Ground Forces, Air Force, and Police and generally backed by a strong militia. Ethiopia is now land locked following the de-jure independence of Eritrea, hence it has no navy. The breakdown of its military power if given as follows:

Military manpower-military age: 18 years of age.

Military manpower - availability

Males aged 15 - 49: 13,520,302 (1999 EST.)

Military manpower fit for military service

Males aged 15 - 49: 7,052,710 (1999 EST.)

Military manpower - reaching military age annually.

Males: 655,290 (1999 EST.)

Military expenditure - dollar figure: \$ 138 million (FY 98/99)

Military expenditure - per cent of GDP: 2.5% (FY 98/99)

### **Army**

Constitutes 97% of the uniformed forces organized as follows:

Five revolutionary armies

31 infantry divisions

2 tank battalions

8 commando brigades

Slightly over 230,000 people

200,000 member people's militia

1,200 T 54/55 Soviet tanks

100 T 62 Soviet tanks

1,000 armored personnel carriers (APCs) - Soviet

Artillery Units possess a variety of Soviet equipment.

Air Force

4,500 officers and airmen

150 combat aircraft

7 fighter - ground attack squadrons

1 transport squadron

1 training squadron

79 helicopters.

Equipment maintenance is generally poor due to economic constraints and supply of spares for the mainly soviet equipment. Although Eritrean threats to Ethiopia justify a strong military deterrence, a

country like Ethiopia cannot continue spending 2.5% of its GDP or more on the military. It has the ability to modernize its equipment and reduce the size of the standing army. The training and arming of militia is another viable alternative , as it may be activated in time of need. As long as Ethiopia's army is for defensive purposes as it has been, it poses no threat to security in the Horn of Africa.<sup>9</sup>

### **Remedies**

The conflicts revolving around Ethiopia are not necessarily of Ethiopian making. Ethiopia is a victim of several years of disadvantageous political manipulations, some of which are beyond immediate resolutions. The remedies for Ethiopian conflicts are:

Immediate resolution on the border conflict with Eritrea by peaceful means such as negotiations through the UN, the OAU, and regional leaders or directly through the International Court of Justice. Ethiopia to restrain itself in the face of aggression and react militarily only in self-defense.

Ethiopia to adopt and promote more democratic practices to minimize or eradicate opposition movements' political grievances.

Ethiopia to improve the economic and social conditions of its people by providing equal opportunities and fair distribution of resources.

Ethiopia to strive to control excess weapons in the hands of unauthorized factions to promote security in the region.

Ethiopia to seek assistance from IMF and the World Bank in its military demobilization programs to ensure that the demobilized personnel settle down to alternative occupations or further their education.

Ethiopia should co-operate with other neighboring countries in matters of collective security, bilateral trade by joining existing regional organizations like the East African Community.

## **ERITREA**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Established as an Italian colony in the late 1880s through an Italian - Ethiopian pact known as the "Treaty of Wichale" in May 1889, a small area of northern Tigrai was thus ceded to Italy. After the ratification of the treaty by the Italian government on 1 January 1890, the designated area of agreement for colonization was consolidated into a single political entity known as "Eritrea".<sup>10</sup>

Eritrea comprises ethnic diversity composed of nine major tribal and ethnic groups (Afar, Begia, Bilen, Kunama, Nara, Rashaida, Saho, Tigre and Tigrinya). Muslims living in the lowlands populate about half of the country. The other half living in the highlands are Christians, mainly Orthodox Christian and Roman Catholic.

Italian attempts at extending the borders to annex parts of Ethiopian highlands in March 1896 ended in disaster when Italians lost 4,600 of their nationals. In 1913, Italian civilian governor Ferdinando Martini devised a system of using Eritrea as an outlet for Ethiopian products. By the time Italian dictator Benito Mussolini invaded Ethiopia in 1935, up to 25% of Ethiopian exports as well as imports were

channeled through Eritrea. The most important function of Ethiopia under the Italian rule was to supply soldiers for Italian expansion elsewhere.

When Italian occupation ended in April 1941 after its defeat by a joint Ethiopian-British force, Eritrea was federated to Ethiopia by a UN resolution. This loose federation ended in 1962 at the end of the UN mandate, but Ethiopia incorporated Eritrea as part of its territory. This gave rise to the emergence of resistance and major secession movements led by the Eritrean peoples Liberation front which finally succeeded in freeing Eritrea of Ethiopian rule on 24 May 1991. Eritrea was finally granted independence and formed its own government on 24 May 1993, following a referendum and with the blessing of the new Ethiopian government.

### **Political**

Eritrea is a presidential republic with a non-elected government providing the transition. Government affairs are run by the executive, which is made up of the Eritrean Council chaired by the President of the Eritrean government Isaias Afworki. The legislative branch is composed of a National Assembly with 150 members whose term limits are not established. The Judicial branch is composed of the Supreme Court, 10 provincial courts and 29 District Courts.

In May 1997, a new procedure was adopted whereby 75 members of the old central committee of the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) and 60 members of the 527 member constituent assembly was established and mandated to discuss and ratify the new constitution. At the same time 15 representatives of Eritreans living abroad were formed into Transitional National Assembly to serve as the country's Legislative body until countrywide elections for National Assembly are held. Only 75 members will be elected to the National Assembly and the other 75 will be members of the central committee of the Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), the only party recognized by the government.

While the Eritrean political system has poised itself to strengthen a democratic institution where none existed before, it is doubtful as to whether the process itself will not ignite political dissent in the long run. The ethnic diversity in Eritrea and the need for competitive politics demand that more than one party is necessary to provide checks and balances. A new political conflict is already in the making in Eritrea. There is a brewing conflict between Afar peoples and the Tigrigne speaking people within the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Force (EPLF). This may be another new dimension of a protracted ethnic struggle.<sup>11</sup>

### **Eritrea-Ethiopia border conflict**

While Eritrea has set in motion the process for democratization and subsequent elections, its recent conflict with Ethiopia is clearly a black spot in its political process as an emerging state. On May 12 1998, Eritrea invaded Ethiopia for territorial claims based on an undefined border issues. The nature of the conflict itself and the manner in which Eritrea acted in its aftermath are rather puzzling. The events that led to the border issue are well documented in history. The UN as well as other international bodies was well aware of the issue which has its roots in the Italian colonial period in Eritrea and its invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. As to whether the territory in question rightly belongs to Eritrea or Ethiopia is not an

issue at this stage but one fact is clear: Ethiopia has been peacefully administering the area from 1902, exercising sovereignty over it.

The UN, OAU and other reputable international arbitrators immediately took the initiative after the Ethiopian military response to reconcile and urge the warring nations to resolve the issue by peaceful means. Ethiopia has readily agreed to settlement by peaceful means as proposed by the arbitrators. On the other hand, Eritrea has taken on a hard stand declaring that it does not recognize borders that were drawn or established by 'colonists or Europeans. Eritrea has also made similar claims on the border with neighboring Djibouti basing its claims on maps drawn by the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini in his wars of expansion in the period before and during World War II. While Eritrea has not invaded Djibouti as it has done in the case of Ethiopia, there is cause for worry that Eritrea has expressed its desire to resolve border issues by the use of force.

### **Eritrean economic demands**

The Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict may appear only as a border dispute but certain developments prior to the cross-border skirmishes seem to suggest otherwise. Prior to the conflict in 1998, Eritrea had made three sets of demands as follows:

Currency problems: Eritrea vigorously requested that Ethiopia allow the circulation of the new Eritrean currency inside Ethiopia and that Ethiopia convert Eritrean stocks of old Birr into US dollars (totaling about 200 million dollars) and hand it over to Eritrea. Ethiopia refused to comply with either request.

Trade problems: Eritrea's largest trading partner is Ethiopia, accounting for 67% of Eritrean exports. Despite the end of the common currency arrangement between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1997, Eritrea desired to continue having preferential access to Ethiopian market. Ethiopia required that Eritrea conduct its trade with Ethiopia using hard currency, which is perfectly normal as in the case between all other trading nations. The Eritrean president declared this "unacceptable".

Divergent economic strategies: Eritrea has consistently viewed itself as a centerpiece of economic activity in the Horn of Africa. As such, it has based its economic strategies on the assumption that Eritrean companies would have preferential access to the Ethiopian market. Eritrea's plans conflicted with Ethiopia's intention to develop its own manufacturing capacity and to process its own raw materials rather than simply export them to Eritrea.

Looking at these three economic contradictions one can see that an issue such as currency and exchange are subject to procedures which must follow either as internationally accepted procedures or modalities mutually agreed by parties concerned.

With this kind of attitude, Eritrea stand to ruin its future markets in Ethiopia, Djibouti and other neighboring countries. The high level of exports from Eritrea to Ethiopia will most likely come to an end in the face of the hostilities. Furthermore, Eritrea's current account deficit was 22 percent of GDP in 1996 according to World Bank data.<sup>12</sup>

## **Ethiopia – Eritrea Border Dispute**

After Eritrea's Independence, it immediately entered into a dispute with Yemen over the ownership of the Hanish Islands in the southern Red Sea. After a brief exchange of fire, the issue has been submitted to arbitration by the International Court of Justice. The Court ruled to divide the Islands between the two nations, but the solution satisfied neither side.

## **ERITREAN MILITARY**

The Eritrea Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF) forms the basis of the army of independent Eritrea. The Eritrean Navy however was formed from the remnants of the Ethiopian Navy, all of which were based on the Eritrean coast. Substantial Sudanese, Chinese (PRC) and Iranian assistance has gone into the development of the small coastal fleet since early 1992.

Eritrean troops, 85,000 strong, are formed from the remnants of (EPLF) after its independence in 1993. The Eritrean Air Force was given two Harbin Y-12 twin turboprop transport planes as a gift by China (PRC) to celebrate its independence. The president of Eritrea serves as the commander in chief of the Armed forces. The breakdown of the military is as follows:

Total Armed Forces - 85,000

Reserves - Not known (But militia mobilization probable).

Service period - Indefinite (It may be similar to Ethiopia's).

Annual military expenditure - not known.

### **Army**

Has a manpower of 84,000 and is currently transforming into a conventional army from (EPLF) force.

### **Equipment**

Infantry weapon - AK-47

Anti-Armor RPG-7

Anti-aircraft: SA-7 man portable SAM.

Artillery: 76mm, 85mm, 122mm, 130mm plus rocket launchers.

AAA - 25mm, 37mm, 40mm.

Armor - T-54, T-55 main Battle Tanks, variety of former Soviet armored vehicles (previously in Ethiopian Army service)

No Army Aviation.

### **Navy**

Manpower approximately 1,000

Service: Unspecified.

Fleet

Frigates:

2 ex USSR petya II class (believed inactive)

Training ship - 1 ex US Barnegat class.

Light forces:

2 ex USSR Turya - class FAC (T) hydrofoil.

4 ex USSR Osa II - class FAC (M) with SS-N-2A, possible replaced with silkworm SSMs.

2 ex USSR Mol - class FAC (T)

3 swift-type large patrol craft.

4 Steward class

Mine sweepers/patrol ships:

1 ex Dutch widervank - class (fitted with SS-12 SSN)

Landing craft:

2 ex USSR polnocny B-class

4 French EDIC - class LCU

4 ex USSR T-4 class LCVP

1 support ship

Less than half of this force is believed to be operational. There is no Naval Aviation. The Naval bases are:

Assab (with ship repair facility)

Embaticalla (former marine commando training school)

Massawa (traditional EPLF naval HQ; Dahlak Island).

### **Air Force**

2 Harbia Y-12 twin turboprop transport (Possibly additional light aircraft).

Major Air Base - Massawa.<sup>13</sup>

The Eritrean military equipment in general is poorly maintained due to the aging factor and spares problems. Eritrea's infant economy cannot be expected to quickly modernize the military equipment in the near future. It should however be noted that Eritrea has sufficient battle tested manpower to mobilize, geographically and strategically positioned naval facilities, and potential allies to assist in a military build up. China and Iran are already providing military assistance and may continue to do so. Basing the trends on military analysis already given, one cannot also rule out assistance from countries like Libya and North Korea.

Going by the military analysis already given, Eritrea is faced with many threats. Due to the internal threat from the Afar rebels, the conflict with Ethiopia, the border issue with Djibouti and the border dispute with Yemen, Eritrea is not likely to demobilize its huge force of 85,000 strong in the near future. My assessment is that Eritrea may be on the way to becoming one of the most militarized countries in the Horn of Africa through external military assistance.

### **Remedies**

The events discussed in this paper clearly indicate that Eritrea may have aggressive tendencies. Like in the case of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the UN has an obligation to ensure the removal of Eritrean forces from Ethiopia in addition to other actions. Eritrea is no exception to the rules, if

it continues fuelling instability in the region while defying both the UN and the OAU.

Eritrea should enhance genuine multi-party democracy that will take care of the interests of the minorities and other interest groups in order to defuse internal strife and avert civil wars.

Eritrea's number of people under arms is 85,000. Keeping a large force which is economically difficult to maintain is a threat to security not only in Eritrea but also in the rest of the Horn of Africa region.

Eritrea should demobilize its large military to levels that commensurate with its defense requirements. Like Ethiopia, it may seek support of the IMF and the World Bank in her demobilization program to ensure proper resettlement or employment of demobilized troops in other areas of nation building.

As a result of the analysis of the current events, Eritrea's position as a stable nation in the future is already doubtful. It has a great potential for becoming one of the most problematic countries in the region.

The UN, OAU, and other members of the international community should monitor activities in this country to ensure that it does not become a haven for terrorist activities and a base for rogue states to further their interests.

On the Efforts for the resolution to the Eritrea-Ethiopian conflict, the OAU through its Union of African parliaments on the 21<sup>st</sup> conference held in Niamey, Niger from 18 - 20 August 1998 stated that:

"Eritrea abide by the OAU and security council recommendations for Eritrean Armed Forces to withdraw from occupied Ethiopian administered territories; to the point where it was prior to developments of 6 May 1998."

It also called upon the international community, particularly the African parliament, to facilitate the investigation regarding the occurrence of war crimes in the conflict as alleged by a resolution of the House of Peoples' Representatives of Ethiopia.<sup>14</sup>

These and other resolutions were communicated to Eritrea and other concerned parties. To date, neither has Eritrea complied nor shown signs of likely compliance. The UN, OAU and other members of the International community should act quickly to enforce the resolutions to build confidence for the future of aggressed states.

It is strongly recommended that should Eritrea continue to defy the UN and OAU resolutions, actions to include economic sanctions should be applied to serve as a lesson to other would be aggressors.

## **DJIBOUTI**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

France took possession of Djibouti in 1888 naming it French Somaliland. A Frenchman Leonce Lagarde who had been named commandant of the territory of Obock in June 1884 founded it. The French were later to abandon Obock in favor of Djibouti due to numerous advantages. France acquired its foothold on the Somali coast peacefully and cultivated good relations with local tribes.

The French concentrated their development around Djibouti, which quickly flourished in all forms of trade. Before the coming of the French, Djibouti had strong trade and cultural ties with Ethiopia, which continued well after the French colonization. When the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 began, France declared neutrality although it sympathized with the Ethiopians. Although the Italians did not invade or conquer Djibouti, they took advantage of the French neutrality to launch their war efforts using the port of Djibouti and the railroad.<sup>15</sup>

After World War II, the French continued ruling and developing Djibouti amid open criticism on the continued colonization even long after several African colonies, many of them French, had been granted independence. The merger of British and Italian Somaliland in 1960 followed by independence is in itself a cause for sharp criticism particularly from Somalia who viewed the two French territories of Afas and Issas as one of the Somali provinces that was to be incorporated in the "Greater Somali" program.

After a successful development and administration, the French granted independence to Djibouti on 27 June 1977. It covers a land area of 21,980 sq. km about the size of Massachusetts and is relatively small in comparison to the rest of the states in the Horn of Africa. Over half of Djibouti's population of about 550,000 lives in the city of Djibouti. The country is generally inhabited predominantly by two cultural groups, Somali Issas and Afars. Arabs make up 5% of the population. Of some foreign 12,000 foreign residents, 10,000 are French.

## **POLITICAL**

Djibouti has a republican type of government with 5 administrative districts. It operates on a multi-party constitution approved in referendum of 4 September 1992.

The president as chief of state and a Prime Minister as head of government constitute the executive. It has a cabinet with council of ministers responsible to the president. A president is elected by popular vote for a term of six years and Djibouti held elections on 7 May 1993 while the last elections were held on 9 April 1999. Former president Hassan Gouled resigned and did not seek re-election in the last elections.

The Legislative branch is made up of a chamber of deputies with 65 seats. Members are elected by popular vote for 5 years. Last legislative elections were held on 19 December 1997 and the next will be in the year 2002. Despite the active participation of two opposition parties, the People's Progress Assembly (RPP) which is the ruling party won all the 65 seats.

Judicial branch: The country has a High Court while the legal system is based on French Civil Law System, traditional practices, and Islamic law.

Political parties:

Ruling party: Peoples Progress Assembly or RPP.

Other parties: Democratic Renewal Party or PRD;

Democratic National Party or PND.

Political Pressure Groups:

Front for Restoration of Unity and Democracy or FRUD, and affiliates; Movement for

Unity and Democracy or MUD.<sup>16</sup>

In the over 22 years of its independence, Djibouti has practiced accommodative and stable politics and has become one of the indisputable democratic models in the face of political chaos in the region.

#### **Eritrea-Djibouti border tension**

Just like in the case of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border dispute, Eritrea has made claims to Northern Djibouti territory. This is based on Italian colonial era maps of expansion. The Eritrea government published a new official map in 1995 showing a strategic section of Djibouti from Ras Doumera to Dar Elwa annexed to Eritrea. The area is strategic because Bab-el-Mandeb straight on the entrance to the Red Sea. The source of Eritrea's claim is well known. It is the agreement signed between Mussolini and the French Foreign Minister Pierre Laval in January 1935. As part of this agreement, France ceded a strip of Northern Djibouti to Italy and also ceded a strip of Northern Chad (Aozou strip) to be included in Italy's Libyan colony. In return, Italy agreed not to support Germany in case it went to war against France. However, this agreement was never ratified by the French parliament and in fact Italy reneged on the agreement in 1938. The territorial modification envisaged did not actually take place.

#### **DJIBOUTI MILITARY**

The French had considered that Djibouti was surrounded by friendly nations, hence the French built no formidable force. The post independent Djibouti has not in a way undertaken military expansion programs. Its National Army is a combination of small Air Force and Naval elements that together with the police carry out emergency and general security services as they have always done in the French colonial era. Its military potential however is as follows:

Military manpower - availability

Males age 15 - 49: 105,075 (1999 EST)

Military manpower - fit for military service

Males age 15 - 49: 61,712 (1999 EST)

Military expenditures - dollar figure: \$ 22.5 million (1997 EST)

Military expenditures - percent of GDP: 4.5% (1997 EST)

Djibouti has hardly what one can term a military force that can cause some security concern in the region. It needs however to review its military requirements in the face of mounting threats from Eritrea so as to have some form of a deterrent force.

#### **Remedies**

Due to its post independence political stability as already analyzed, Djibouti is a fast developing nation in the troubled Horn of Africa region. It should be accorded all necessary assurances and assistance by the UN, OAU and other members of the international community whenever it is directly or indirectly threatened. Territorial claim already made by Eritrea amounts to threat.

The analysis on Djibouti's military seems to suggest that it review its requirements in order to build an effective deterrent force due to uncertainty of security in the region.

Djibouti is geographically positioned in a strategic waterway on the Red Sea- coast .It can therefore take advantage of this position to improve its regional and international trade.

Due to its traditional and cultural ties with Ethiopia, Djibouti may explore the possibility of forging a strong alliance both economically, diplomatically and militarily in order to be more secure. This would also assist the Landlocked Ethiopia to gain continuous access to the Red Sea, as Eritrean ports may be unreliable until the territorial and other related issues are resolved.

Djibouti may consider strengthening its regional trade and ties by joining or cooperating with the already promising regional bodies like the East African Community of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. It would be in Djibouti's interests to bring up the matter on the claims by Eritrea on parts of its northern territory for deliberations by the UN Security Council or the International Court of justice for arbitration rather than wait until a conflict emerges out of the issue.

### **EFFECTS OF INSTABILITY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS**

Having analyzed the causes of instability in the Horn of Africa, it is important to note that conflict or instability is not conducive to economic development and social welfare in the region. Border areas between Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia, which have been perennial scenes of conflict since the early 1960s, are among the least developed in the region due to insecurity. The spillover of factional fighting in Somalia to neighboring Ethiopia and Kenya is a cause of concern. There are also scores of refugees in Kenya that have fled from ethnic fighting in Ethiopia and Somalia. In the 1998 Eritrea- Ethiopia cross-border war, Ethiopians who used to live and do business in Eritrea had to abandon their homes to seek refuge in Ethiopia. On the other hand, Eritreans living under the same conditions in Ethiopia had to do the same. Sudan, which is not covered under the conflicts discussed in this region, has contributed significantly to the number of refugees in both neighboring Kenya and Ethiopia and other countries. Gangs of gunmen roaming the countryside in search of food and resources have completely threatened the economic and social well being of the pastoral nomads in neighboring countries. This puts a strain and unnecessary burden on the governments of these countries in trying to cope up with the safety of the refugees as well as protection of their environments from wanton destruction disease and insecurity brought along by some of the refugees. Refugee influx to various destinations has resulted in breakups of various family unions which may be impossible to reverse for a long period and costly in monetary terms. The young and displaced youth among the refugees cannot settle and obtain a meaningful education hence, future generations may not be relied upon as a source of skilled manpower in their countries of origin once peace has been attained.

### **THE ROLE OF THE OAU**

Since its founding in 1963, the OAU has not been effective in the resolution of conflicts in Africa. Despite the legal mandate it has in the making of resolutions, it lacks the necessary resources to ensure or enforce their implementations. In the last OAU meeting of the Council of Ministers held in Cairo in the early part of the year 2000, it was clearly expressed that OAU was cash-strapped. This issue of finance

has been raised at almost every session. This means that the Organization cannot meet its obligations or run its affairs satisfactorily. This has been brought about by some Member-States' failures to pay their dues on time, falling in arrears or not paying at all. Due to the circumstances, it has been difficult for the OAU to put in place an effective security mechanism to respond timely and effectively to crises in Africa. In the 1973 Conference at Rabat (Morocco), a recommendation was made for the setting up of the Executive Secretariat of Defence. The purpose of this institution was to organize and co-ordinate collective security matters. However, twenty-seven years later, no Executive Secretariat for Defence has been set up nor have any measures for collective defence been adopted. The near moribund OAU has over the years been ineffective as masses of African people are killed or displaced by wars and internal strife.

Before discussing the role of OAU and its role in the conflict resolution in the Horn of Africa, it is important to understand the purpose of its establishment. The purposes of the Organization are stated in Article II (I) of 1963 as follows:

- To promote the unity and solidarity of the African States;
- To co-ordinate and intensify their co-operation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;
- To defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence;
- To eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa;
- To promote international co-operation, having due regard to the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

To achieve the aims stated in Article II (I), the Member- States pledged themselves to coordinate their policies, especially in the following fields:

- Politics and diplomacy;
- Economics, including transport and communication;
- Education and culture;
- Health, sanitation and nutrition;
- Science and technology;
- Defense and security.

The Charter at the time however, did not provide for collective security in the sense that Member-States are legally obliged to come to the assistance of another Member-State in the event of aggression. This omission was rectified in a document adopted at the 1973 OAU summit conference at Rabat (Morocco)

The defense and security issues at the time were specifically aimed at dealing with aggression from colonial powers i.e. Portugal, Rhodesia and Apartheid South Africa, where protracted struggles by African guerrilla movements supported by independent African States were going on to free Africans in Mozambique and Angola as well. The issue of collective security to deal with aggression by one independent African country on another had not arisen, neither had the problem of civil wars and internal

turmoil within African States become a matter of concern. The brief Nigerian civil war of the late 1960s was the only experience at the time.

The following are the seven principles of the OAU as embodied in Article III:

- The sovereign equality of all Member-States.
- Non - interference in the internal affairs of States.
- Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence.
- Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration.
- Unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighboring States or any other State.
- Absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent
- Affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocks.<sup>17</sup>

The principles are a further attestation that the major concern for the Member States then was their personal precautions against probable future violations by fellow Member- States on their sovereignties. Whatever fears they may have had, have been confirmed by not only the events in the Horn of Africa region but also other regions in the rest of Africa. The OAU has undoubtedly succeeded in eradication of all forms of colonialism in Africa but all the other objectives as stated in its Purposes and Principles have fallen short of the high expectations. This is because some of the African nations have neither adhered to the objectives stated in Articles II and III of the OAU Charter, nor has any violator been disciplined by the Organization.

Conflict in the Horn of Africa is only one of the problem areas that the OAU has not been fully able to solve. As far as the conflicts in the Horn of Africa are concerned, the OAU has the potential to play a significant role as it still the only mandated African organization through which African member states can address issues. The OAU has also got strong links and working relationship with both the UN and other members of the International Community. Although the case of Somalia is probably one of the more complex ones in the region, the OAU should be more effective in proposing remedies and pressing the UN and other members of the international community for assistance. It is the OAU, which is supposed to be the driving force in seeking solutions instead of it being driven by the UN and the events in the region. The fact that the OAU itself is headquartered in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), one of the most troubled countries in the region, is enough reason that African regional conflicts in the Horn of Africa should be resolved as a matter of priority.

One of the major reasons for the failure of the OAU to resolve conflicts such as those in the Horn of Africa speedily and effectively may lie in the weakness of the second clause in its Charter. The rest of the clauses though needing review are still applicable if enforced.

Article III of the OAU charter of 1963 stipulates "Non interference in the internal affairs of States."

In order to deal more effectively with issues such as the conflicts in the Horn region, the OAU should review its charter, which has long been overtaken by events. It is about time that the OAU

reorganizes itself, reviews its charter and re-defines its role in the face of the new political challenges (like failed states) in Africa. Intervention to restore law and order by OAU Member-States in a situation such as Somalia, whether militarily or by other means should no longer be viewed as interference but a matter of moral obligation to end further human suffering. One of the options that the OAU may adopt if it has to respond militarily is to have a Standby - Force. In the case of the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict, OAU Observers and cease-fire monitoring Units should have been on the ground while peaceful negotiation to the settlement of disputes is on going. The OAU should gradually change from the dormant tool that it has been for the last 35 years to an enforcement authority.

### **THE ROLE OF THE UN**

In the recent past, the United Nations' role in the resolution of conflicts in the Horn of Africa has somehow fallen short of expectations. This argument may be supported from the fact that whatever happened in Somalia is similar in a way to what is going on in the Balkan region of Eastern Europe. What happened in the case of Ethiopia-Eritrea border conflict is no different to what happened in the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. These are only a few examples as there are other cases like Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and others in Africa where large populations have been left to butcher each other for long period before intervention forces arrive or they do not arrive at all. In the case of Somalia, the few willing intervention forces hurriedly left at the insistence of their countries when the going became tough. On the other hand, as the going got tougher in Kosovo, the tough nations got going pouring in more troops and exerting their military might. Does this mean that the warring warlords in Somalia are tougher than some of the already subdued war criminals in Kosovo or there is another unwritten explanation? Is Eritrea exceptionally more sacred than Iraq or is the security of Ethiopians of less priority than that of Kuwaitis. In my judgement based on the UN response to the Somalia crisis and the events in Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict, their double standards and selective application of rules practiced by the Security Council in dealing with crises in Africa as a whole.

During the Somali crisis, it was the initiative of the United States that saved the Somali people from starvation. The war in Somalia was not an overnight occurrence but a regular series of events whose evolution and final disastrous outcome could not have escaped even the attention of an Organization as big as the UN. Unlike the war in Kosovo where NATO undertook to intervene rapidly, the OAU had no such organized forces, equipped to respond accordingly. Many regional leaders in East Africa, South Africa and West Africa have the political will to help resolve the Horn of Africa conflicts but lack the resources to do so. Africa is looking hopefully at the UN because it has the resources that will go a long way in helping to conflict related problems.

From the events that unfolded during the United States' intervention in Somalia, it is likely that no nations are willing to risk the lives of their troops in dangerous places like Somalia. This paper has discussed the possibility of sanctions on Eritrea, while the measures already taken on the Somali factions should continue till they come to an agreement. It is a known fact that sanctions must be enforced if they

are to achieve the intended results. Sanctions may be enforced without necessarily placing troops within either Somalia or Eritrea.

My analysis on the past role of the UN on resolving conflicts such as those in the Horn of Africa region is that the UN has not done enough. The UN should commit more resources and work hand in hand with the OAU and other regional organizations to bring to an end the conflicts in the Horn of Africa.

## **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The summary of recommendations for the Horn of Africa countries is as follows:

The UN, OAU and International Communities should adopt tougher stands in dealing with the conflicts by timely reaction, enforcement of mandates and adherence to resolutions ,and taking punitive measures including trial of war criminals without favor.

A provision should be made for control of arms in volatile African regions including the Horn of Africa to be followed by demobilization of excessive military troops to levels required for maintenance of security.

Like in the case of the commonwealth, OAU should take stern measures on African countries that are elusive in pursuing democratic ideals while being threats to security in the region .This could be done by suspending, expelling and isolation of members in order to make the OAU a credible organization.

All border disputes among African states should be resolved peacefully as soon as possible to enable countries to develop without fear.

The international financing institutions like the IMF and World Bank together with other donor organizations should continue to dispense development loans to African countries while insisting on the reduction of military forces to manageable levels. Developed nations with good will should review their arms sale policies like the United States has done to include all other forms of military assistance by ensuring that developing countries do not acquire arms in excess of their defense requirements.

The Horn region has one of the highest refugee concentrations in Africa. The UN and OAU should make it a priority to resettle these people in their respective countries and to re-unite them with their families once peace is attained.

All Member-States of the OAU are duty bound to pay their dues and should do so to enable the OAU to remain a credible and effective Organization.

It is finally recommended that Africans should seek long lasting - solutions to their own problems since they are in a better position to understand their unique problems. This can be fully achieved by strengthening regional organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

## **CONCLUSION**

Having given a detailed analysis of the background and sources of conflict in four countries in the Horn of Africa region, it is a hope that all the factors discussed be they ethnic, border issues, politics or trade, are matters that are within individual African countries' ability to resolve. They may also resort to

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regional organizations and the OAU for assistance. Countries in conflict either within themselves or with others in the Horn of Africa should ideally be directing their efforts to bettering their economies and regional trade. Markets abroad are getting fewer and competition is stiff. The solution to better prosperity is seeking regional markets like in the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia before their conflict. Instability even in a relatively less inhabited area like the Horn region has a corresponding Domino Effect to Global peace and security. Due to the nature of conflicts that have been analyzed in this paper, this region has remained one of the most improvised regions in Africa. The Horn of Africa region however, has great potential for trade due to its geographical location once it is free of all nature of conflicts.

WORD COUNT=10,488



## ENDNOTES

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<sup>16</sup> CIA - The World Fact book 1999 - Djibouti

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